

# NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2010

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## DIALOGUE ON RELIGIOUS SLAUGHTER

### Dialrel project: first results presented

The second advisory board meeting of the DIALREL project – short for Dialogue on Religious Slaughter – was held on 9 February, and was attended by representatives from the DIALREL project team, religious authorities, DG Sanco, Eurogroup for animal welfare, the European meat sector and the FVE (Nancy De Briyne). In between many interesting presentations, stakeholders constructively dialogued on possible ways to improve animal welfare in relation to slaughter.

Denis Simonin (DG Sanco) gave a presentation on the new EU Regulation on slaughter. The Regulation, which will apply from January 2013, will increase operator responsibility, require all slaughterhouse staff to possess a certificate of competence and will request them to appoint an animal welfare officer. Although it is a Regulation, stricter national rules will still be allowed regarding farmed game, killing outside the slaughterhouse and also in relation to religious slaughter.

Rossella Bottoni (Milan University), member of DIALREL, presented the results of the DIALREL project, which summarized the current legal rules concerning religious slaughter. Most EU countries allow religious slaughter without prior stunning, provided a number of requirements are met. Austria, Denmark (only for bovines), Estonia and Slovakia require post-cut stunning. In Latvia and Sweden, slaughter without prior stunning is prohibited.

Florence Bergeaud-Blackler (Université de la Méditerranée / DIALREL) presented the results from the survey of kosher consumer attitudes and opinion towards religious slaughter. The participants declared that eating kosher had some importance for them but found the market generally of low demand, low availability with a plethora of kosher standards which can confuse consumers. A fact sheet both on the survey of kosher and halal consumer attitudes will soon be available on the DIALREL website.

**Continued on page 2**

## PARTNERSHIP



When developing the Animal Health Strategy for the European Union (2007 – 2013), the European Commission

realised that it could not achieve its objectives alone. In order to strengthen the collaboration with stakeholders, an Animal Health Advisory Committee was created. This Committee, with representatives of a broad range of organizations with an interest in animal health and welfare, meets at regular intervals.

The agenda of last meeting covered many different items. Next steps in the development of a new Community Animal Health Law were discussed. It was also highlighted that, with the entering into force of the new EU Treaty, the protection of animal welfare has been given stronger legal base. Another recent development that was mentioned was the transfer of the legislation on medicinal products to Directorate-general SANCO (responsible for health and consumer protection). In this area, several important initiatives are being taken, such as the evaluation and revision of legislation on veterinary medicines and medicated feed.

So far, the Committee has shown to be a valuable platform for the exchange of information and opinions. Clearly, in such a large group, not everyone will agree and compromises need to be found. However, what should not be compromised is our final goal: the improvement of the health and welfare of animals and people, which coincides with the goal of the veterinary profession.

*Jan Vaarten, Executive Director*

Karen von Holleben (veterinary welfare expert, DIALREL) presented her findings regarding the veterinary scientific aspect related to religious slaughter practices. She explained the different pains involved, the assessment of consciousness, impact on bleeding, different restraining systems used and the pros and cons of the different slaughter methods. She concluded that “neck cutting without stunning poses the highest risk for animal welfare”. Plenty of discussion followed on providing information to the consumer, who according to FVE has the right to be informed (see FVE position on slaughter without prior stunning<sup>1</sup>).

The full reports will be available at the time of the final conference which will take place in Istanbul on 15 and 16 March. For further information: <http://www.dialrel.eu/istanbul-final-meeting>

The DIALREL project is funded by the European Commission and involves partners from 11 countries. It addresses issues relating to religious slaughter in order to encourage a dialogue between stakeholders and interested parties.

## ANIMAL HEALTH

### ONE HEALTH

#### EU Veterinary Week: 14-15 June 2010

Following the success of the EU Veterinary Weeks held in 2008 (on biosecurity) and in 2009 (on zoonoses),

FVE and DG Sanco decided to continue the successful collaboration and organise the Veterinary Week 2010. The chosen topic this year is ‘Identification and traceability’ and the event will be held on 14 and 15 June in the Charlemagne building in Brussels.

Over 400 participants are expected, including representatives from the Member States, Chief Veterinary Officers, members of the European Parliament, scientific experts and representatives from veterinary and medical associations, representatives from veterinary teaching establishments, farming associations and consumer groups.

After presentations outlining the importance and benefits of identification and traceability, three sessions will be held during the meeting: on the identification of live animals and germinal products; on traceability and labelling in the food and feed chain; and on traceability in international movements – including pet identification.

Due to its success, the Road show – a customised van promoting the “one health” concept – has been prolonged until at least April 2011. Its current schedule can be viewed online<sup>2</sup>.



Road show van in Stockholm

Following the successful cooperation with students in 2009, it was decided to involve students again this year. On 8-9 March, students will be invited to a meeting in Brussels, where the Veterinary Week preparatory plans will

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.fve.org/news/position\\_papers/animal\\_welfare/fve\\_02\\_104\\_slaughter\\_prior\\_stunning.pdf](http://www.fve.org/news/position_papers/animal_welfare/fve_02_104_slaughter_prior_stunning.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.one-health.eu/ee/index.php/en/page/follow\\_the\\_bus\\_tour/](http://www.one-health.eu/ee/index.php/en/page/follow_the_bus_tour/)

be outlined. Students will be invited to prepare activities together with students from agricultural schools in the field of identification and traceability.

The EU Veterinary Week was moved forward to June this year so that next year, the event might coincide with the World Veterinary Day and 'Vet 2011', the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of veterinary science<sup>3</sup>.

## EFSA REPORTS

### Parasitic zoonoses: harmonized monitoring

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published external reports on how to monitor and report several parasitic zoonotic agents in the EU in a harmonised way. The proposed harmonised monitoring schemes concern *Sarcocystis*<sup>4</sup>, *Trichinella*<sup>5</sup>, *Echinococcus*<sup>6</sup> and *Cysticercus*<sup>7</sup>.



Harmonised rules for pet travel require harmonised prevention + control strategies

In view of the requirements and potential risks of pets travelling freely throughout Europe, harmonised *Echinococcus* monitoring would be of particular interest, according to FVE. In its opinion on the proposed Regu-

lation on the movement of pets<sup>8</sup>, the FVE recommends "that the EU Commission initiate an EU-wide echinococcosis risk assessment, to be followed by an appropriate prevention and control strategy throughout the Community"<sup>9</sup>.

Echinococcosis can have very serious consequences. Caused by the tapeworm *Echinococcus multilocularis*, the eggs of this parasite can be ingested by people following transmission by their pets, but also by wildlife. Currently, five EU member states apply specific measures regarding the treatment of companion animals against tapeworm, prior to entering their territory. In a previous scientific opinion, EFSA recommended that surveillance systems in wildlife and pets should be established urgently in order to define risk areas and criteria for freedom from *E. multilocularis*.

## FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE

### Dutch researchers release report

A scientific team of the Agri-economic institute LEI-DLO<sup>10</sup> showed that a quick and large-scale vaccination within a radius of at least 2 km is as effective as pre-emptive 1-km ring culling to mitigate FMD epidemics. The researchers also concluded that control measures should primarily target cattle farms. After the epidemic, most seropositive animals are expected on sheep farms and vaccinated cattle farms. Market accept-

ance by trade partners of products of vaccinated animals can limit the economic consequences of outbreaks of FMD.



FMD report LEI-DLO

## ANIMAL WELFARE

### BELGRADE, MARCH

### Taiex conference on animal welfare

'Animal Welfare, from cure to prevention' is the title of the conference to be held in Belgrade (Serbia) on 24 and 25 March. The meeting, aimed at official veterinarians and veterinary practitioners from Serbia and its neighbouring countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Turkey), is organised jointly by Taiex<sup>11</sup>, the Serbian ministry of agriculture, the Serbian veterinary chamber and the FVE.

Following a general session on animal welfare and strategies developed by the Serbian government, the World organisation for animal health (OIE), the Food and Agriculture Organisa-

3 <http://vet2011.org>

4 <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/33e.htm>

5 <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/35e.htm>

6 <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/36e.htm>

7 <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/34e.htm>

8 Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 998/2003 on the animal health requirements applicable to the non-commercial movement of pet animals

9 [http://www.fve.org/news/position\\_papers/animal\\_health/fve\\_09\\_051\\_movement\\_pet\\_animals.pdf](http://www.fve.org/news/position_papers/animal_health/fve_09_051_movement_pet_animals.pdf)

10 <http://www.lei.dlo.nl/publicaties/PDF/2009/2009-042.pdf>

11 Technical Assistance Information Exchange Instrument (DG Enlargement)



tion and the European Union, practical workshops will be held on the Wednesday afternoon. Experts will explain and apply the Welfare Quality® assessment tools in practice on poultry, cattle and pig holdings. The meeting will also allow an exchange regarding education in animal welfare.

The working language of the meeting will be English, although translations into Serbo-Croatian are planned. For further information, please contact the FVE office.

## ANIMAL WELFARE CONFERENCE

### Everybody is responsible

The First international conference on animal welfare education "Everybody is responsible" will be organised jointly by DG Sanco and the Belgian presidency of the EU at that time, with the aim to *"further inform citizens about animal welfare and to raise awareness on the importance of educating people about how animals should be treated"*. The conference is planned for 1 and 2 October 2010, and will include presentations on qualitative criteria in animal welfare education, teaching animal welfare and sharing experience with existing programmes.

FVE has been invited to become member of the steering committee, and Nancy De Briyne attended the first kick-off meeting on 5 February on behalf of the FVE. At the meeting, the objectives and actions were outlined in more detail. In view of the conference, a drawing contest on animal welfare will be organised for children and a fair presenting the existing educational programmes and tools will be held on the second day of the conference. A dedicated web site is also planned. The next steering

committee meeting will be held on 12 March.

## EU ACTION PLAN

### Evaluating the EU Animal Welfare Policy

The Community Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals is the first EU longterm strategy to improve the protection of animals. It sets out a timetable for new legislation and includes other mechanisms that will promote animal welfare over the period 2006-2010.



A EU action plan 2011-2015 will be developed

In November 2009, the Commission mandated an external consultant to evaluate the EU strategy on Animal Welfare, with reference to farm animals, experimental animals, pet animals and wild animals which are kept in captivity or submitted to a treatment which is controlled by humans. The evaluation is to be achieved for December 2010 and will be the basis for a future EU action plan (2011-2015)<sup>12</sup>.

A project website ([www.epaw.eu](http://www.epaw.eu)) has been established in order to raise awareness of the evaluation and to also provide an opportunity for interested individuals to access relevant reference material and to forward their comments to the evaluation team.

<sup>12</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan//actionplan\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan//actionplan_en.htm)

The European Parliament is currently debating possibilities for an official call to set the wheels in motion for a Second Animal Welfare Action Plan. Marit Paulsen MEP has launched an own-initiative report in the Parliament's Agriculture Committee.

In parallel, the FVE is also preparing its evaluation conclusions and proposals for the new action plan.

## EU PARLIAMENT

### ALDE seminar on welfare

A seminar on animal welfare and its importance to human welfare was held on 4 February in Brussels. Organised by the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) group of the European parliament, its aim was to 'have a broad discussion on animal welfare from an economic and scientific point of view'. Speakers included Paola Testori-Coggi (deputy director-general of DG Sanco), Ivar Vågsholm (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences) and Meurig Raymond (deputy president of the National Farmers' Union of England and Wales).



Discussion panel during ALDE Seminar on animal and human welfare

Panel discussions were held with Andrea Gavinelli (head of the Animal Welfare Unit at DG Sanco), Sonja van Tichelen (director, Eurogroup for Animals) and Per Olsen (chairman COPA-COGECCA working party on animal health). Nancy De Briyne attended on behalf of the FVE.

In the field of animal welfare, much headway had been made, concluded Marit Paulsen. *"Most discussions*

*were about the how and when, but not about whether we even should have legislation on animal welfare. The discussion used to be like that ten years ago."*

While the seminar was about animal welfare in general, a substantial part of the presentations focused on antimicrobial resistance. Ivar Vågsholm, who spoke about antibiotic resistance, called for "antibiotic-free animal production". However, in his presentation, Meurig Raymond suggested that "veterinary medicinal use is far more frequently in the small animal and companion markets than in farm and food producing animals." Antibiotic resistance was "first and foremost a repercussion of human and small animal medicine" and should therefore "not be dealt with in the action plan on the protection and welfare of animals", Mr Raymond concluded. The various presentations can be found on the ALDE webpage<sup>13</sup>.

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## PUBLIC HEALTH

### FVE HYGIENE WORKING GROUP

#### New Challenges

The new FVE working group on hygiene will meet on 22 February and will discuss among other things the new FVE stable-to-table leaflet, a questionnaire on the implementation of the Hygiene package and the planned modernisation of meat inspections.

Members of the new FVE Hygiene working group are Margareta Widell

(Sweden, chair), Henning Knudsen (Denmark), Thierry Chambon (France), Cornelia Rossi-Broy (Germany), Gundega Micule (Latvia), Roberto Balbo (Malta), René Lesuis (Netherlands) and Ragnhild Arnesen (Norway).

### EFSA & ECDC

#### Zoonoses report 2008

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) have published their Annual Report on Zoonoses and Food-borne outbreaks for 2008<sup>14</sup>. This report gives an overview of zoonotic infections and disease outbreaks caused by consuming contaminated food. The report shows that the number of human cases of the three most reported zoonotic infections was lower in 2008 than in 2007.

Campylobacteriosis remained the most frequently reported zoonosis in humans across the EU, with 190,566 cases notified in 2008 (down from 200,507 in 2007). In foodstuffs, Campylobacter, which can cause diarrhoea and fever, was mostly found in raw poultry meat. In live animals, Campylobacter was found in poultry, pigs and cattle.

Salmonella, the second most reported zoonotic infection in humans, decreased significantly for the fifth consecutive year, with 131,468 cases in 2008 compared to 151,998 in 2007 (-13.5%). It remained however the most frequent cause of food borne outbreaks. Salmonella was found most frequently in raw chicken, turkey and pig meat. In animal populations, an important decline of the Salmonella type Enteritidis –the type most frequently affecting humans

– was observed in laying hen flocks. Successful application of hygiene measures has, for the first time, demoted poultry meat from first to second place as most common source of infection, behind pork.

The report, which covers 15 zoonotic infections, also provides data on other zoonoses, such as Listeria, Q-fever, verotoxigenic *E. coli*, brucellosis, bovine tuberculosis and rabies, and the two parasitic zoonoses trichinellosis and echinococcosis.

### DG SANCO

#### John Dalli, Commissioner for Health

John Dalli (Malta) is the new Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection of the second mandate of the Barroso Commission. Qualified as an accountant, Dalli worked in the private sector in Malta and abroad, both in industry and as an independent consultant.



John Dalli, new Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection

He was first elected to the House of Representatives of Malta in 1987 and had served as Parliamentary Secretary for Industry, Minister of Economic Affairs, Minister of Finance and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Investment Promotion. He is currently Malta's Minister of Social Policy.

His new responsibilities will also include medicines (see page 7).

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.alde.eu/en/details/news/seminar-animal-welfare-human-welfare-3/?no\\_cache=1](http://www.alde.eu/en/details/news/seminar-animal-welfare-human-welfare-3/?no_cache=1)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1496.htm>

# MEDICINES

## FVE: MEDICINES

### Working group to discuss antimicrobial resistance

Availability of medicines for horses, responsible use of medicines and medicated feed were among the items discussed at the November meeting of the FVE Medicines working group (see previous Newsletter). During their upcoming meeting, to be held on 17 February, they will discuss topics including the staff working paper of the Commission on antimicrobial resistance, medicines availability for bees and the BVA poster on the responsible use of anthelmintics. At the meeting, Eva Zamora Escribano (DG Sanco) will give a presentation on the role of the Commission in the ad hoc Codex task force on antimicrobial resistance.

The FVE Medicines working group consists of Christophe Buhot (France, chair), Johan Van Tilburg (Belgium), Thierry Chambon (France), Rainer Schneichel (Germany), Henk Vaarkamp (Netherlands), Rens van Dobbenburgh (Netherlands), Andrew Robinson (UK) and Peter Jones (UK).

## ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

### EU public consultation

Following the publication of the staff working paper on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in November 2009<sup>15</sup>, the European Commission is currently holding a public consultation, which will be open until the end of March 2010.

<sup>15</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/salmonella/antimicrobial\\_resistance.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/salmonella/antimicrobial_resistance.pdf)

The working paper provides an overview of the activities already undertaken by the EU in combating the AMR in the past decades. The paper collects the activities related to AMR in the areas of public health, zoonosis control, animal health and welfare. It covers among others monitoring, risk assessment, risk management and research on AMR. It also identifies areas where further actions, like improvement of surveillance systems in human medicine and ensuring the prudent use of antimicrobials in animal husbandry, may be required.

Aim of the consultation is *“to gather stakeholders’ opinion on the staff working document and its reflections on the way to tackle AMR”*. Target groups are stakeholders, competent authorities, medical doctors, veterinarians and scientists. FVE will also respond to the consultation.

## ANTHELMINTICS

### British vets produce poster on ‘responsible use’

On 22 January, the British Veterinary Association (BVA) launched a guidance poster containing powerful messages to vets to encourage the responsible use of anthelmintics in grazing animals, following ongoing concern about the development of resistance to these medicines.

Anthelmintics are used throughout the world for the treatment of worms and other endoparasites in sheep, cattle, goats and horses, as well as in companion animals, but misuse in grazing animals, leading to resistance, is an increasing problem, which has now become a serious threat to the health and welfare of the animals.

The poster will be distributed to BVA members and will be available to

download from the BVA website<sup>16</sup>. The FVE Medicines working group will examine a possible Europe-wide adaptation of the poster.



BVA poster:  
responsible use of anthelmintics

## EMEA WORKSHOP

### Bees need medicines, too

The problems in the bee-keeping sector and the decline in the bee population all over Europe and the world are complex and diverse. The availability of veterinary medicines for bees remains a major concern. The European Medicines Agency held a workshop entitled *“Medicines for bees - What the Agency can do to increase availability”* on 14-15 December 2009.

The workshop brought together experts from the bee keeping and honey production sector, experts in bee diseases and treatment of bees, representatives from the regulatory authorities of Member States, the European Commission, the animal health industry and other interested parties. The aim of the workshop was to identify a list of substances that are essential for the treatment of bee diseases in Europe.

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.bva.co.uk/public/documents/BVA\\_Anthelmintics\\_poster.pdf](http://www.bva.co.uk/public/documents/BVA_Anthelmintics_poster.pdf)



The agenda and background document of the European Medicines Agency workshop are available online<sup>17</sup>.

## EU COMMISSION

### Medicines now placed under DG Sanco

The President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, has decided to transfer the management of pharmaceuticals and medical devices policies from the Directorate General-Enterprise to DG-Sanco (Health and Consumer Policy).

If the new Commission is effectively approved by the Parliament, it is expected that the leading role of DG-SANCO will give a new start to the European Commission's approach to health and medicines.

## PIG CASTRATION

### First painkiller licensed for use during castration

The veterinary product Metacam (5 mg/ml) has been officially authorised by the European Union as a painkiller during the castration of piglets. Produced by the company Boehringer Ingelheim, it is the first product with this indication. The authorisation is based on research carried out by the French research centre CTPA, which has demonstrated that the product, if injected prior to castration, leads to lower cortisol levels than without the product. Treated piglets also recover and return to normal behaviour more rapidly than control pigs that did not receive any form of analgesia.

## GLOBAL ANIMAL HEALTH

### World Organisation Animal Health promotes VICH



*"Veterinary medicinal products and vaccines are indispensable tools for any effective animal health and welfare policy,"* reminds Bernard Vallat (see picture),

Director general of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), in his 20 January editorial<sup>18</sup>. However, these important factors of health are not innocuous products, he adds. Their use should be strictly supervised, for, in the absence of public sector controls, the risks associated with their imprudent use *"may far exceed any potential benefit"*.

The control of veterinary products includes regulations governing their importation and/or manufacture. This is why veterinary products have to be officially registered before they can receive marketing approval, he explains. To this end, the OIE works closely with the Veterinary International Conference on Harmonisation (VICH), which is the only international body that adopts and issues guidelines on technical requirements relating to the registration of veterinary medicinal products.

*"As soon as VICH guidelines have gained sufficient recognition by the international community, the OIE will in turn submit them to its Members for adoption as OIE standards."* In the meantime, as a sign of OIE/VICH cooperation, the VICH General Assembly and the 4<sup>th</sup> VICH Global Conference will be held at the OIE Headquarters in Paris in June 2010.

## EDUCATION

### SCHOOL EVALUATIONS I

#### Liege fully, Cordoba conditionally approved

During its last meeting on 2 and 3 February the European Committee on Veterinary Education (ECOVE), gave full and unconditional approval to the veterinary faculty of Liege (Belgium). The dean of Liege was congratulated for all actions promptly taken after the conditional approval the school received last autumn. During a revisit, which took place only a few months later, the school was able to demonstrate that all outstanding issues were resolved. One of the actions taken by the school was the development of a comprehensive biosecurity Standard Operating Procedure<sup>19</sup>.

At the same meeting, the veterinary faculty of Cordoba (Spain) was conditionally approved.

Rectors and deans of other schools, which could not (yet) be approved, were encouraged to continue their efforts to improve the quality of education. The chair also invited them to let him know if they feel ECOVE could be of assistance.

ECOVE, a joint committee of European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) and FVE, is chaired by the president of EAEVE, Marcel Wanner. Because his mandate as president of EAEVE will expire at the end of May, he will also step down as chair of ECOVE. He was much praised for all his contributions to the assurance of the quality of veterinary education.

17 [www.ema.europa.eu/pdfs/conference/flyers/bees/Agenda.pdf](http://www.ema.europa.eu/pdfs/conference/flyers/bees/Agenda.pdf)

18 [http://www.oie.int/eng/edito/en\\_lastedito.htm](http://www.oie.int/eng/edito/en_lastedito.htm)

19 [http://www.ulg.ac.be/fmv/actualites/Biosecurity\\_Manual\\_Final\\_6Jan10.pdf](http://www.ulg.ac.be/fmv/actualites/Biosecurity_Manual_Final_6Jan10.pdf)

## SCHOOL EVALUATIONS II

### Wanted: veterinary practitioners

Approximately 100 establishments for veterinary training in Europe are visited and evaluated once every 10 years. The system for visitation and evaluation of veterinary schools is jointly organised by the FVE and the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE).

The visit is carried out by a team of veterinary experts (basic science, small and large animals, food hygiene and animal production). Every expert is responsible for the evaluation of a specific part of the curriculum. They visit the departments of the school or faculty and speak with several people (dean, students, academics, technical assistants, etc). A final evaluation report is presented to ECOVE (European Committee of Veterinary Education), which decides whether or not a school can be placed on the so-called 'positive list': the list of visited and approved schools.

A visitation generally takes about 5 days. The group always tries to arrange the visits far in advance and not to use the same expert for more than one visit per year. The visited school covers the costs for travel and accommodation of the visiting experts.

FVE and EAEVE are currently updating the list of visiting experts and are looking especially for large and small animal practitioners willing to join the visiting teams. For more information please contact the EAEVE office ([office@eaeve.org](mailto:office@eaeve.org)) or submit a completed application form<sup>20</sup> directly to them.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.eaeve.org/evaluation/experts.html>

## FVE & PROFESSIONAL MATTERS

### IFAH

#### European Pet Night: "We care" - 24 February

European Pet Night is back on 24 February. Its aim is to heighten public awareness on the complex issues surrounding the welfare of pets and their role in European society and to allow politicians to have a genuine exchange of views with stakeholders from the sector.



Service dog at European Pet Night 2009

The evening reception will be opened by the host MEPs Caroline Lucas (President of the parliamentary intergroup on the conservation and welfare of animals, Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety) and Dr Horst Schnellhardt (Veterinarian; Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety).

An initiative of the International Federation for Animal Health (IFAH), the event is co-organised by the FVE and other stakeholders. FVE will have an information-booth at the venue, while the Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations will distribute its document

on the Economic impact of pet animals and the Health impact of pets.

The meeting will be held from 18h30 to 20h00 in the Member's salon of the European Parliament in Brussels. Registration is mandatory before 17 February<sup>21</sup>. For more information, see the dedicated page on the IFAH website<sup>22</sup>.

## FVE WORKING GROUP

### Statutory bodies' representatives to meet

The newly established FVE working group on Veterinary Statutory Bodies will meet in Brussels on Friday 5 March. Agenda points of this first meeting include the terms of reference of the working group, the evaluation of the implementation of the Professional Qualifications Directive, equine dentists and the "grey list" of the Services Directive.

The FVE working group on Veterinary Statutory Bodies will assist FVE in developing its position regarding the regulation of the Veterinary profession (the access to and the exercise of veterinary medicine) in Europe. It will also facilitate the exchange of information between national competent authorities and support FVE in assisting its members regarding regulations on the provision of veterinary services.

The working group is composed of: Stephen Ware (FVE Board – Chair), Solfrid Åmdal (Norway), Valerie Beatty (Ireland), Véronique Bellemain (EASVO, France), Damyan Iliev (Bulgaria), Donatella Loni (Italy), Christian Rondeau (France) and Joost van Herten (Netherlands).

<sup>21</sup> send an email to [p.barcellona@ifahsec.org](mailto:p.barcellona@ifahsec.org)

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.ifaheurope.org/EventDetails.aspx?ID=55&SubMenuId=26&MenuId=4>



A further meeting is already planned for 10 June, on the eve of the FVE General assembly, in Basel.

## FVE 2011-2016

### First FVE Strategy meeting held in Berlin

The FVE held the first of its three regional strategic meetings in Berlin on 19 January. These meetings are held in preparation of its strategic plan 2011-2016. The meeting was attended by 25 delegates from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden and the UK. For the FVE Board, President Walter Winding and Vice-Presidents Ljiljana Markus-Cizelj and Stephen Ware participated.

The strengths of the veterinary profession, the changing social environment and how the veterinary profession could best deliver its services were discussed, as well as many other topics concerning the future of our evolving profession.



Subgroups discussed the future FVE strategy and current challenges in Berlin

The outcome of this first meeting and of the two subsequent meetings in Belgrade (23 March) and Madrid (20 April) will be used for drafting the new FVE strategy. After discussion with the sections and circulation, the draft will be presented and possibly adopted at the Spring general assembly of the FVE in June.

## COMMUNICATION

### New FVE leaflet!

The new FVE presentation leaflet is now available on the FVE website<sup>23</sup>.



This leaflet aims to provide the general public with some basic information about FVE, its members and its activities. Paper copies are available at the FVE Office.

## FVE OFFICE

### Goodbye Nicole, welcome Francesco and Despoina!

Nicole Schreiner (Dr. med. vet.), veterinary policy officer, will leave the FVE to take up a new position in Germany on April 1st. Her last day at the FVE office will be 18 February. Ms Schreiner joined the FVE office more than three years ago. The FVE and its members thank her for her work and wish her all the best for her new ventures.

Francesco Proscia, an Italian veterinarian who qualified from the University of Perugia in 2000, joined the FVE office as veterinary policy officer on January 1st. After graduation Francesco first worked in general practice, then joined the FAO in 2004,

where he assisted the veterinary public health group with a project to support countries with economies in transition and developing countries in capacity building for surveillance and prevention of BSE/TSE and other zoonotic diseases. He then moved to the UK where he worked in the field of meat and hygiene inspection. Before joining the FVE, he worked for the FAO once more, in the Animal Health and Production Division (AGA) providing consultancy on the Animal-Human Interface.

Another new face at the FVE office is that of Despoina Iatridou-Chrysafidou, a Greek veterinarian, who will be joining the FVE as a veterinary policy officer (part-time) from 15 February. Despoina qualified as a veterinarian from Thessaloniki University in 2000 and was owner of a private companion animal practice for seven years. Apart from a certificate in companion animal surgery & radiology, she also holds a postgraduate accreditation in the planning, introduction and audit of HACCP systems.

## FVE SPRING GA

### 11-12 June in Basel

The upcoming general assembly of the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe will take place in Basel, Switzerland on 11 and 12 June. The FVE sections will hold their general assembly on 10 June.

The GA is expected to focus on the outcome of the strategic meetings and zoonoses, and will have a guest speaker from the FAO. The week prior to the FVE general assembly, another major veterinary meeting will take place in Switzerland: the congress of the World Small Animal Veterinary Association, which will be attended by FVE president Walter Winding and vice-president Christophe Buhot.

23 [http://www.fve.org/news/publications/pdf/fve\\_info\\_leaflet\\_2010.pdf](http://www.fve.org/news/publications/pdf/fve_info_leaflet_2010.pdf)

## FEMKE KIESTRA, FVE INTERN

### 1. How did you end up at the FVE office in Brussels, as a final year veterinary student from Utrecht?

At the Utrecht University, there are six possible programmes to follow during the final year of Veterinary Medicine: Companion Animal Medicine, Production Animal Medicine, Equine Medicine, Veterinary Public Health, Veterinary Science and Management & Policy. The Management & Policy programme consists of ten weeks of education about the food chain of cattle, pigs and poultry, a minor in the field of management and policy and two internships (six weeks and twelve

sembly I even gave a short presentation. This was a very good experience for me because I never spoke in public in front of so many people – and in English! Furthermore, I also had the opportunity to see how the secretariat of the FVE did their daily work.

### 3. What kind of work did you do?

During my internship I assisted with the work going on in the office. For example I worked on the summary of a questionnaire on puppy trade and helped organizing the meeting for that. I wrote a report about Q fever describing the situation in the Netherlands and in other European countries, and tried to make an estimation of how great the risk for the rest of Europe is to get the same kind of outbreak (see page 12) or footnote<sup>1</sup>. For this report I



Femke Kiestra, Veterinary Student at the Utrecht University, Netherlands

weeks). I choose the elective Management & Policy and spent my 12-week internship at the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe in Brussels.

### 2. What did this internship offer you?

During this internship I did and learnt a lot. I went to several meetings and conferences, including the EU Veterinary Week, the Influenza conference, the global OIE conference on veterinary education in Paris, a stakeholders meeting of the European Commission, several working groups and I “experienced” the FVE general assembly! During the general as-

interviewed some experts and went to two meetings, one in the Netherlands and one in Paris.

### Any additional comments?

I had a really great time during my internship at the FVE office. I would absolutely recommend other students to do an internship at the FVE! It is a great opportunity to see how the “European structure” works, you get the chance to meet a lot of different people from all over Europe and to see what kind of work an organisation like the FVE does.

<sup>1</sup> Inventarisation and management of the public health risk of Q fever (*Coxiella burnetii*) in the European Union

## FVE SECRETARIATS

### Next Networking meeting 31 May – 1 June

The FVE Secretariats Network Group, created in 2006 to facilitate and improve information exchange between FVE member associations, held its meeting on 7 and 8 December. Meetings, which are usually attended by executive directors or permanent office staff members of these associations, are held two times a year.

The December meeting was attended by representatives from 11 member associations. Participants discussed various general topics including the impact of the economic recession on the profession, the support for veterinarians working cross-borders or planning to move abroad, external and internal communication tools and the EU Veterinary Week. During the round table discussion, each delegate presented the current challenges and developments affecting veterinarians in their respective countries. These included working conditions, piglet castration, micro-chipping, pet passports, the right to dispense medicines, meat inspection duties and antimicrobial resistance.



Network members exchange information and discuss communication tools

The next Secretariats Network Meeting will take place on 31 May and 1 June 2010 in Brussels. The agenda and the invitation to the meeting will be sent out in due time. Suggestions for topics can be sent to: [info@fve.org](mailto:info@fve.org). The final minutes of the last Sec-

retariats Network Group meeting can be read under the Secretariats web page (FVE member login).

## FEEVA MEETS WEVA

### European horse vets meet in Hungary: 28-29 May

The intermediate meeting of the World Equine Veterinary Association will be held at the Kölcsey Convention Centre in Debrecen (Hungary) on 28 and 29 May. The event is hosted by the Hungarian Association of Equine Practitioners, in conjunction with the British Equine Veterinary Association and the Organisation of Hungarian Veterinarians.

At the occasion of this event, the Federation of European Equine Veterinary Associations will also hold its General Assembly on Thursday 27 May.

## ECONOMIC RECESSION

### Veterinary profession not spared

That the veterinary profession had also been hit by the economic recession was confirmed by figures from the UK, France and the Netherlands, presented by Rens van Dobbenburgh, vice president of the Union of European Veterinary Practitioners (UEVP), speaking at the November general assembly of the UEVP, held on the eve of the FVE general assembly. Although the figures were not necessarily representative of the profession, and could therefore not be easily compared, they all indicated a drop in turnover or at least a stagnation of growth compared to the preceding year. Overall, cattle practices seemed to be hardest hit, probably

as a consequence of the drop in the milk price.



The low milk prices seem to have a negative impact on cattle practices

In the Netherlands, equine and cattle practices seemed to be hardest hit, with a turnover in early 2009 of only 60 and 68% of that during the same period in 2008. Dutch swine and companion animal practices had fared best, with 85 and 74% of turnover, respectively. In France, large animal practice showed a drop in consultations, drug sales and turnover (-8.5% per FTE vet compared to 2008) while the companion animal segment was doing reasonably well and even showed a slight growth (+4.2%) compared to the previous year. In the UK, companion animal vets experienced a growth in turnover of 0.7 per cent in June, compared with 2.4 per cent in the preceding year, but a drop in the average number of visits per client.

## RECOGNITION

### Tjeerd Jorna, honorary member of the FVE

At the November FVE general assembly, Tjeerd Jorna became honorary member of the Federation.

Mr Jorna has been actively involved in FVE for many years. From 1990 to 2003, he was member of the Dutch delegation to FVE. He was a member of the medicines working party (1990 to 1994) and the financial Committee (1999 to 2003). From 1990 to 1994



he also was a delegate to UEVP, and in 2001 he was elected as UEVP vice-president. He was a member of the Advisory Committee on Veterinary Training and of several expert visitation teams.



FVE honorary member Tjeerd Jorna

The most important contribution he made to FVE was during his 4-years presidency, from May 2003 until May 2007. In his own calm, always friendly and very competent manner, he navigated FVE away from the troubled waters and led it into a stable and successful period. Step by step, he managed to close the ranks and to reinforce the Federation's cohesion and influence.

Tjeerd Jorna strengthened FVE's relation with organisations such as the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE), the European Board for Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). On his initiative, FVE developed a first long-term vision and strategy plan; an action plan was developed and FVE improved its internal and external communication. Under his leadership, FVE's influence on political decisions has grown considerably.

As current president of the World Veterinary Association, he unrelentingly continues his activities for the veterinary profession and most of all for the benefit of both animal and public health and welfare.

## Q-FEVER IN THE EU

### Inventarisation of the public health risk

Q-fever, a zoonosis caused by the bacterium *Coxiella burnetii*, is endemic in most parts of the world, including Europe. The Netherlands have observed a sudden increase in the number of human Q-fever cases over the past years. In a report<sup>24</sup> entitled *"Inventarisation and management of the public health risk of Q fever (Coxiella burnetii) in the European Union"*, FVE intern Femke Kiestra outlines the measures taken by the Dutch government and the lessons to be learnt. She notes that, although, at the moment *"there does not seem to be a real problem with Q fever in other European countries to the same extent as in the Netherlands, there are regions with a similar situation as in the Netherlands: large dairy goat farms situated in densely populated areas"*. For that reason *"it would be a good idea to monitor the situation closely"*.



Cattle, sheep and goats are the primary animal reservoirs for Q fever

One of the lessons learnt is that *"it is essential that veterinarians, doctors, farmers, researchers and veterinary and public health institutes share information. Optimizing animal health and minimizing public health risks can only be assured by working together"*.

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.fve.org/news/position\\_papers/public\\_health/q\\_fever\\_report\\_femke\\_kiestra\\_jan\\_2010.pdf](http://www.fve.org/news/position_papers/public_health/q_fever_report_femke_kiestra_jan_2010.pdf)

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